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2007-2008**

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*HUNDREDS OF POLICE CHIEFS,  
SHERIFFS, PROSECUTORS, OTHER LAW  
ENFORCEMENT LEADERS, AND  
VIOLENCE SURVIVORS PREVENTING  
CRIME AND VIOLENCE*

## **Testimony & Support for H.R. 81 Provided to the House Education Committee July 24, 2007**

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## **Comments by Chief (ret.) Eric King**

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Eric King and I'm the former Mt. Morris Twp. Police Chief and I am the statewide co-chair of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids – a non-profit crime prevention organization led by the sheriffs, prosecutors and police chiefs whose mission it is to call on our public officials to make investments in the proven programs that help track children to success and opportunity before they become criminals.

I appreciate the opportunity to be here today on behalf of our more than 400 members and on behalf of a little girl who was shot to death on February 29, 2000, by her 1<sup>st</sup> grade classmate in my jurisdiction. You have my account of that tragic homicide in the materials that we provided you. It was different from the many other cases of child abuse and neglect that the men and women in law enforcement experience far too often. That case had two victims – the innocent little girl who was murdered and her young assailant who had been neglected.

- In Michigan, in 2005 there were more than 29,000 substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect. Nationally, the best estimate of the real number of children abused or neglected each year is closer to three times the official figure, so the true number of Michigan children abused, neglected or even killed is likely to be much higher.
- The six major in-home parent-coaching programs currently operate in Michigan. An outline of the programs is provided for you in your packets. They are all proven to get positive results before abuse or neglect occur. They have similar components that include parenting education, information and referral, home visits, and access to substance abuse services and medical care. In addition to saving children, they can help save valuable tax dollars when we reduce costs associated with child abuse and neglect.
- These programs across Michigan have resulted in significant reductions in child abuse and neglect referrals. Also, the RAND Corporation concluded that these programs averaged more than \$18,000 in savings for every family in the program. An analysis of these programs also found that reduced crime costs accounted for almost two-thirds of the savings.

- Child abuse and neglect prevention costs are cheap in comparison to housing and programming a juvenile offender at \$85,000 to \$125,000 per year or incarcerating an adult for \$45,000 per year.
- Unfortunately, there is an unmet need. We aren't doing enough to prevent child abuse and neglect on the front end. Each year we watch our state lawmakers struggle with fewer funds that can jeopardize our children when we don't fund prevention and intervention programs.
- **Every dime spent on prevention efforts makes a huge difference. What happens when we don't have enough revenue for these kids? At 17 years old, they can't read and they can't write, they've been arrested multiple times. They're hanging around in the school parking lot, selling dope. They are totally unemployable. The case of the child who murdered Kayla Rowland is a shining example of what happens when this kind of stuff goes on unchecked.**
- Passing the Education Begins At Home Act will provide communities with needed resources to help prevent child abuse and neglect. We ask you to pass House Resolution 81 to send that message to Congress.

Thank you!

### Eric King Recalls When a Child Shot a Child

*The interview that follows is an example of the powerful stories FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS members have to tell. Others will be published from time-to-time.*

The Charter Township Mt. Morris, Michigan, has a population of approximately 25,000. While most of Mt. Morris is middle class, the Beecher section is not unlike nearby Flint, which has a high rate of people living in poverty and one of the highest crime rates in the country.

On the morning of Feb. 29, 2000, Mt. Morris Police Chief Eric King was in his office doing paper work when he heard a call on his scanner. The 911 operator was calling for police cars for a shooting at the Buell Elementary School.

"In my experience that could mean a number of things: someone shot in the street and then went to the school for help. But you also think, a shooting in an elementary school, it's probably with a rubber band. Those are the things that go through your mind.

"Then the first officer checks out the location and reports, 'we've got an ambulance and paramedics coming; we've got a child shot in a classroom.' I'm out the door.

"As I pull up in the school driveway, here's our officer wheeling out this little girl. She's 6-years-old, but she's a baby.

"I thought I was a pretty hard and seasoned police officer. I've been involved in police shootings. I shot a guy one time during an armed robbery. I thought I'd seen everything. Then I see this little girl, Kayla Rowland, on a gurney. I could see from the officers' faces that this was a problem. No question, this is serious. I said, 'just get her going.'

"Someone says it's the number two classroom. There are no teachers or kids in the classroom when I entered, just police officers. They've got these miniature desks. They've got their little time-out rugs where they're sent if they're bad. They've got little finger paintings on the wall. There was a small amount of blood.

"Someone told me a student did the shooting. I'm thinking, this has to be someone older. I go down to the principal's office, where I find a little boy. He's sitting on a chair and his feet don't even touch the ground. This is totally unlike anything I have ever encountered.

"The little boy looked like he was there for saying a bad word in the classroom. He had no more idea than the man in the moon of the magnitude of what he had done. He said nothing.

"An officer with Kayla on the way to the hospital reported on the radio that she was in bad shape. Shortly after her arrival at the hospital, she was pronounced dead.

"Parents were arriving at the school saying, 'Is that my baby?' Mothers were grief stricken. You could see a look of terror on their faces. We weren't releasing who it was. The magnitude of the rush on the school was something I had never seen, but it was nothing compared to the rush of the news media that was to follow. Within 24 hours we had reporters from as far away as Japan and Australia.

"We transferred the little boy to the police station, and some time later his mother met us there. The mother was in a welfare-to-work program, but her job was 50 miles away. In order to take the job, she let her two boys stay in Mt. Morris with an uncle.

"Although she was working, the mother had issues. She had an arrest record and she was part of a family of drug dealers.

"Months before the shooting I had contacted the DEA because of a major drug problem involving the mother's family. It was a conspiracy problem that involved generation upon generation—grandparents being involved in drugs, fathers and mothers being involved in drugs, the children, the aunts and uncles.

"DEA agents started to buy drugs from all of these drug dealers involved in the family network. At the time of the shooting, the little boy's father was in jail because he had sold dope to an undercover officer as part of this program.

"The evening of the shooting officers showed up with a search warrant at the house where the boy and his brother were living with his uncle. It was a crack house. Officers who entered the house found a sawed off shotgun and a small amount of dope. A detective on the scene said he had to watch where he walked because there was animal feces all over the floor. There was no food in the house.

"In the back yard was evidence of guns having been discharged into a tree. No doubt the little boys watched this gunplay.

"Ultimately, it turned out that the boy's uncle kept the .32 caliber automatic handgun used in the shooting in a box under his bed.

"Under Michigan law, the little boy faced no prosecution. The state's Family Independent Agency took custody of him and he was placed in the Whaley Children's Center in Flint where he remains.

"The boy's father and mother were charged and found guilty of neglect. The family friend who left the gun unguarded was convicted of involuntary manslaughter.

"In the aftermath of the shooting, money was appropriated in Michigan for different programs to help kids get a good start in life. Within a year after the incident, they started cutting back. Now, almost every dollar in those programs has been cut. It's just terrible what they did.

"Every dime spent on prevention efforts makes a huge difference. What happens when we don't have enough revenue for these kids? At 17 years old, they can't read and they can't write, they've been arrested multiple times. They're hanging around in the school parking lot, selling dope. They are totally unemployable.

"The Kayla Rowland case is a shining example of what happens when this kind of stuff goes on unchecked, when it goes on from generation to generation. I'm not going to let people forget about this, I'm going to carry the torch."

*King is the co-chair of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN. In 2002, he retired as police chief of Mt. Morris Township.*



## **Comments by Sheriff Dwain Dennis**

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, my name is Dwain Dennis. I'm the Sheriff in Ionia County and on the executive committee for Fight Crime: Invest in Kids. I appreciate the opportunity to be here today in support of House Resolution 81 to call for more investments in child abuse and neglect prevention. I've been in law enforcement for many years and can assure you that investing up front is the best bang for the buck.

- Research shows that being abused or neglected multiplies the risk that a child will grow up to be violent. It also shows that mothers who were abused or neglected as children are 13% more likely to abuse or neglect their children.
- Research also shows that high-quality in-home parent coaching programs can cut child abuse and neglect in half and reduce later arrests of the participating moms and their children by 60 percent.
- Targeted investments that help kids get a good start in life can make our communities safer.
- We know that we'll save valuable human lives and see less kids and families in the courts by investing in child abuse and neglect prevention.
- We either pay now or we pay later, but, either way we're going to pay and it's a better deal for everyone if we help these kids to succeed.

I urge your favorable passage of H.R. 81. Thank you!



## CLINTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

1347 E. Townsend Rd.  
St. Johns, MI 48879

WAYNE KANGAS  
Sheriff

Phone (989) 224-5200  
Fax (989) 224-1382

July 24, 2007

Honorable Tim Melton, Chairman  
House Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Rep. Melton,

As the statewide co-chairman of Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, I am honored to work with my other law enforcement colleagues from across Michigan to get at the front end of crime, and to urge the passage of House Resolution 81 to help bring investments to Michigan for child abuse and neglect prevention.

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids has taken a hard-nosed look at what works—and what doesn't work—to cut crime and violence. The research is clear, combined with prior evidence, showing that most abuse and neglect in high-risk families can now be prevented. Doing so will spare tens-of-thousands of Michigan children each year and millions of children across the United States from terror, agony, and despair and will save thousands of lives. Sharply reducing abuse and neglect will save billions of dollars, while greatly reducing the number of children growing up to be violent.

Help us to send a strong message to Congress that Michigan cares about its most vulnerable children and whole-heartedly supports the Education Begins at Home Act by passing House Resolution 81. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Wayne Kangas  
Clinton County Sheriff  
Co-Chairman  
FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN

cc: State House Education Committee Members



Police Department • 2727 Rodd Street • Midland, Michigan 48640-4474 • 989.631.5716 • 989.839.4734-Fax • [citypolice@midland-mi.org](mailto:citypolice@midland-mi.org)

July 23, 2007

Honorable John Moolenaar  
Vice Chairman  
House Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Rep. Moolenaar,

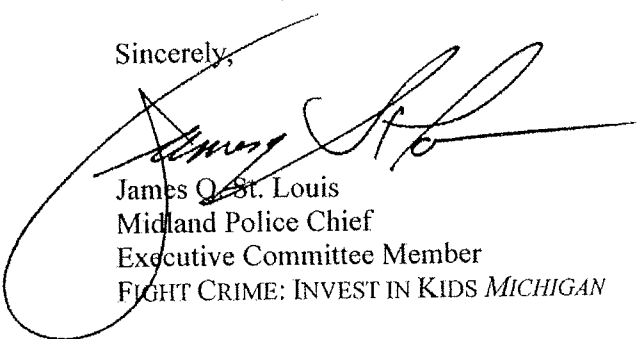
As House Resolution 81 is discussed in the House Committee on Education, I want to express my support for this Resolution. The Education Begins At Home Act, or EBAH, being considered in Congress is one that I fully support. EBAH funds programs proven to reduce child abuse and neglect, an issue of great importance to the Midland Police Department.

In Michigan during 2005, 147,628 families were investigated for suspected child maltreatment. In those families investigated, 28,154 children were confirmed to be victims of child abuse and neglect. Of all confirmed cases of abuse and neglect, more than a third involved children three years old or younger. Over twenty-eight thousand children were abused or neglected in OUR state in 2005. That same year, more than a thousand cases of child abuse and neglect were investigated in Midland County. That is simply unacceptable.

The Education Begins At Home act will provide financial support to in-home parent coaching programs. Six examples operating in Michigan include the Nurse Family Partnership, which helps at-risk pregnant women by receiving in-home visits by nurses during pregnancy, and lasting until the child is two years old. The program cut abuse and neglect among at-risk children in half according to research published in a leading medical journal. In addition, children of mothers who received this coaching had 59 percent fewer arrests by age 15 than the children of mothers who were not coached. The other five in-home parent-coaching programs are Parents as Teachers, Healthy Families America, Early Head Start, Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters, and the Parent-Child Home Program. However, hundreds of thousands of at-risk mothers across the country receive no in-home parent coaching.

I urge your support for House Resolution 81 to ask that Congress provide funding for the Education Begins at Home Act. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,



James Q. St. Louis  
Midland Police Chief  
Executive Committee Member  
FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN





# CITY OF WALKER

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

July 24, 2007

Honorable Tim Melton  
Chairman  
House Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Rep. Melton:

Although I cannot be present for the hearing on House Resolution 81, I urge your favorable consideration.

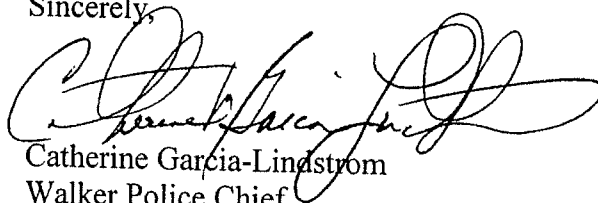
While most victimized children never become chronic criminals, research has shown that being severely abused or neglected can lead to permanent changes in children's brains and in their affective responses. Some children have trouble learning empathy, while others develop a predisposition to misinterpret actions as threatening and react violently. This sharply increases the risk that these children will grow up to be arrested for crimes.

The proven programs that prevent child abuse and neglect are making a difference in the lives of those who utilize them. Sadly, Michigan does not provide the resources to adequately fund the need.

House Resolution 81 will encourage our Members of Congress to bring more resources to Michigan through the Education Begins at Home Act so that we can better combat this ravages of child abuse and neglect. Please pass House Resolution 81 to help start the process.

If you have any questions of me on this matter you can contact me by telephone at (616) 791-6804.

Sincerely,



Catherine Garcia-Lindstrom  
Walker Police Chief

Executive Committee Member

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN

Cc: State House Education Committee Members  
Congressman Vernon Ehlers

**CHIEF CATHERINE M. GARCIA-LINDSTROM**  
4343 Remembrance Rd. N.W. ♦ Walker, MI 49534  
Phone: (616) 453-5441 ♦ Fax: (616) 791-6811

WARREN C. EVANS  
Wayne County Sheriff



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF  
1231 ST. ANTOINE • DETROIT, MI 48226  
TEL: (313) 224-2222 • FAX (313) 224-2367

July 23, 2007

Honorable Tim Melton, Chairman  
House Education Committee  
State Capitol  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Representative Melton:

Thank you for taking up House Resolution 81 urging Congress to pass the Education Begins at Home Act, which is intended to help provide states with federal funding to improve and expand in-home parent coaching programs that have developed a proven track record of cutting crime.

In Detroit, there were more than 4,500 substantiated cases of child abuse or neglect in 2004 that resulted in 4,300 children placed in out-of-home care. This is not only detrimental to children and the community, it is costly to taxpayers. My colleagues and I know from our professional experience – backed up by solid research - that intervening early in a child's life is the best way to prevent them from becoming involved in criminal activity at a later date. To put it another way: when children don't get the right start in life, we're all at risk.

In-home parent coaching offers voluntary assistance to new and first-time parents. During visits to their homes, trained personnel teach parents how to meet the health, nutritional, developmental and safety needs of their children. They also direct parents to community resources that include medical, mental health and child care services.

I appreciate your consideration to pass House Resolution 81 to let our federal lawmakers know that we support this investment in parent education as a way to create safer communities. The federal Education Begins at Home Act will provide states with funding to enhance and expand these vital and proven programs. Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Warren C. Evans in black ink.

Warren C. Evans  
Wayne County Sheriff

cc: Members of the House Education Committee

*"Safer communities through effective, professional law enforcement."*



July 23, 2007

Dear Representative Melton:

ACCREDITED  
HEALTHY FAMILIES AMERICA  
PROGRAM:

A PARTNERSHIP OF COMMUNITY  
ORGANIZATIONS LED BY  
ST. JOSEPH MERCY OAKLAND

I am writing to urge the House Education Committee to support the House Resolution 81 by passing it out of committee. The Education Begins at Home Act will provide federal funds to the states that would help assure strong, healthy and nurturing beginnings for young children through high quality home visiting parent support programs that have been shown to reduce the incidence of child neglect and abuse in higher risk parents.

As a professional for over 20 years in parent-infant/toddler programs, I have been witness to so many wonderful changes in parents who have themselves been abused or neglected or parents with special circumstances that hinder their capacity to offer their children secure and loving relationships, changes that are made possible through an extended parent-child service with a caring, trusted and informed professional home visitor. Beginning as an infant mental health home visitor myself and, in the last decade, as a supervisor for a group of Family Support Specialists at Healthy Families Oakland, serving 250 families around Oakland County currently, I have seen the cycle of violence, the cycle of neglect, the cycle of emotional and/or physical abuse come to a halt because of the partnerships that our specialized home visitors can offer parents. All babies are born to parents with essentially the same wishes, but not all parents are equipped to nurture their children well. *Most parents can learn to do the most important job of parenting IF they are adequately supported with appropriate guidance, information, and responsiveness to their needs.*

Better and sustained funding for a variety of home-based parent-infant/toddler programs will best help Michigan to grow citizens who are productive, mentally and physically healthy and well-educated. This is exactly what the Education Begins at Home Act can help accomplish!

Although there are many families assisted by Healthy Families Oakland each year, there are literally thousands over the 12 years of our existence who could have benefited from ours or similar services, had more funding been available. Funding that could have prevented the neglect or abuse or death of so many young children, those most vulnerable and most at risk of harm being under 2 years old. We see families from all corners of the county, from all walks of life.

We recently began services to an 18 year old pregnant woman in Troy who has the support of her family, but was scared and uncertain about how she would stay in school, learn how to support and care for her baby, work part-time, etc. She has delivered a healthy baby girl and is soaking

up the information and support that her Family Support Specialist is offering her. She has indications of post-partum depression, which can seriously compromise her ability to connect with her baby, but the home visitor is helping her to connect to appropriate mental health services and a support group.

Another family who has been a part of the Healthy Families Oakland for over three years lives in Rochester and came to us when their first child was born, after mom called the local Child Abuse and Neglect Council for help, fearful of hurting her baby. Mom was seriously depressed, dad was in the home but abusive to her when he drank or used drugs. Both had very abusive and neglectful childhoods themselves and were very afraid of caring for their son. After a rocky beginning with the family, needing to support the mother in calling the police after a domestic violence incident (following which the father did jail time), the Family Support Specialist was at the home doing an developmental assessment of the child as he turned 12 months. Dad was home that day and at first not involved. Then he began to participate and was sharing his pride and observations of his son's development. As his son posed next to him in exactly the same position as dad, the home visitor commented on how much this little boy wanted to be like his father. It proved a pivotal day: Dad got into substance treatment, mom into therapy, and both went to marriage counseling for a year. The following year, they were both usually at the home visit together for the home visits, or Dad will call to "check in" with the Family Support Specialist. Dad has stayed employed, been promoted and has been able to buy a house for his family. They have had another baby. There is no more substance or alcohol abuse, domestic violence and there is a family intact and functioning in ways that never would have happened without Dad realizing that day how important he was to his son and how important his actions were as models of behavior. He began to listen to and trust that their home visitor wanted to help them be the best parents they could be. Their son and daughter are thriving, well-nurtured and on target in their social, emotional and cognitive development.

Please carefully consider the many benefits that would be more available to families at risk of harming their children through neglect or abuse through the Education Begins at Home Act. And then move this resolution along for hopeful passage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

*Bonnie Daligga, M.A.*

Bonnie Daligga  
Clinical Services Leader and  
Infant Mental Health Mentor  
Healthy Start Healthy Families Oakland

# New Hope for Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect in Michigan:

## Proven solutions to save lives and prevent crime

A report from  
Law Enforcement

This brief is based on a national report by FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, an anti crime group of over 3,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, victims of violence, and youth violence experts nationwide, including more than 400 members in Michigan. The national report and citations for this brief are available at [www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org).

### Summary

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS has taken a hard-nosed look at what works—and what doesn't work—to cut crime and violence. Exciting new research, combined with prior evidence, shows that most abuse and neglect in high-risk families can now be prevented. Doing so will spare thousands of Michigan children from terror, agony, and despair and will also save lives. Sharply reducing abuse and neglect in Michigan will save hundreds of millions of dollars, while greatly reducing the number of children who would otherwise grow up to become criminals.

### The Annual Toll: 28,035 Michigan Children Abused or Neglected in 2004

In Michigan, there were 28,035 officially recognized victims of child abuse or neglect in 2004. In 2001, there were 5,400 children removed from their homes and 49 confirmed deaths from abuse or neglect. Even those tragic numbers, however, may mask the real toll of child abuse and neglect in Michigan. Nationally, the best estimate of the real number of children abused or neglected each year is closer to three times the official figure, and the Justice Department released a report saying deaths nationwide from abuse and neglect likely exceed 2,000 a year, instead of the 1,490 officially reported in 2004. So, the true number of Michigan children abused, neglected or even killed is likely to be much higher than the officially reported cases.

### The Future Toll: More Criminals

While most victimized children never become chronic criminals, being severely abused or neglected can lead to permanent changes in children's brains. Some children have trouble learning empathy, while others develop a predisposition to misinterpret actions as threatening and react violently. This sharply increases the risk that these children will grow up to be arrested for crimes. Research by Dr. Cathy Spatz Widom found that children who were abused and neglected had almost twice the odds of being arrested as a juvenile.

### Half of Abuse and Neglect in High-risk Families Can Be Prevented

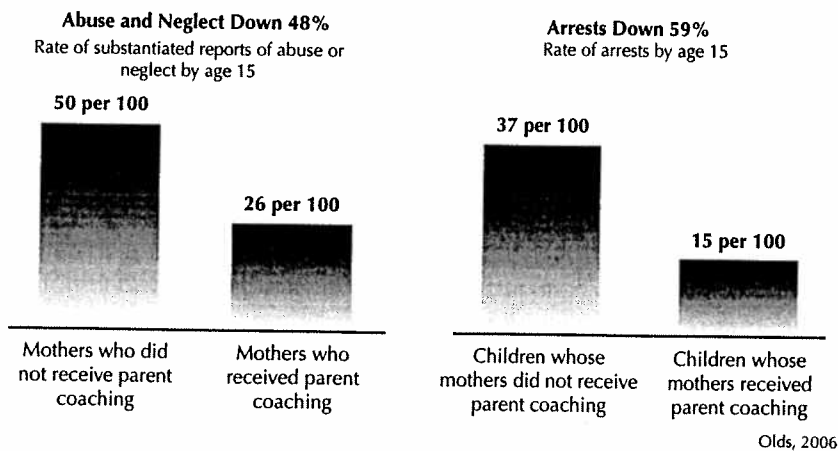
Failure to invest now in programs proven to prevent child abuse and neglect puts everyone in Michigan at greater risk of becoming a victim of crime. The more than 400 Michigan police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and crime victims who are members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS call on their state and federal governments to:

- **Offer high quality coaching in parenting skills to all at-risk parents.** The Nurse Family Partnership Program (NFP) randomly assigned at-risk mothers to receive home visits by nurses who provided coaching in parenting and other skills. Rigorous research, originally published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, shows that children of mothers in

the program had 48 percent fewer substantiated reports of abuse or neglect. Put another way: in-home parent coaching services can prevent nearly half of all cases of abuse or neglect among at-risk children. In addition, by the time the children reached age 15, mothers in the program had 61 percent fewer arrests than the mothers left out of the program, and their children had 59 percent fewer arrests than the kids left out.

- **Offer quality pre-kindergarten programs with parent-training**

**The Nurse Family Partnership Cut Abuse and Neglect and Arrests in Half  
Among the At-risk Kids it Served**



for at-risk children. The Child-Parent Center (CPC) preschool program serves Chicago families in low-income neighborhoods. Similar youth not receiving CPC were almost twice as likely to be placed in either foster care or adopted as the youth in CPC. Youngsters left out of CPC were also 70 percent more likely to have been arrested for a violent crime by age 18, and 24 percent more likely to be incarcerated as an adult than those receiving CPC.

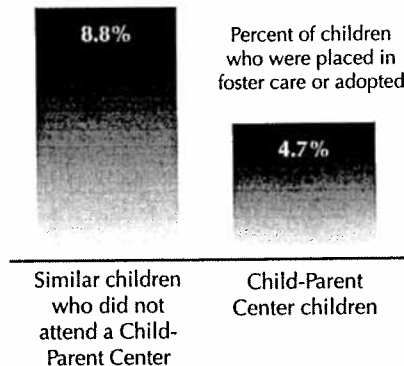
- **Ensure that pregnant women who are addicted have access to drug and alcohol treatment programs.** Maternal drug use during pregnancy can lead to brain damage in the child. Further, fetal alcohol syndrome is the leading cause of preventable mental retardation. The interaction of neurological damage at birth with deficient parenting multiplies the risk of criminality later in life. Research shows that an effective drug and alcohol treatment program for pregnant women in Baltimore dramatically reduced the number of babies who were born prematurely and at-risk for permanent brain damage that is associated with later criminality.
- **Provide mental health services for depressed or mentally ill parents.** People who grew up with a household member who was depressed, mentally ill, or who attempted suicide were two times more likely to have been physically abused than those who did not grow up in such a household. Just like other ill parents, depressed or mentally ill parents can effectively raise children if they receive treatment. Yet studies show only 25 percent of individuals nationally who suffer from depression receive adequate care for their illness.

## Saving Lives, Preventing Crime and Saving Money

Child abuse and neglect costs America upwards of \$80 billion a year. Two-thirds of that is crime costs. In September, 2003 almost 21,400 Michigan children were in foster care. In 2004, \$810 million was spent on preventing or treating abuse or neglect in Michigan,

### Pre-kindergarten Program Cuts Foster Care and Adoption in Half

Children who attended the Chicago Child-Parent Centers pre-kindergarten and parent-training program were nearly half as likely to be placed in foster care or adopted from ages 4 to 17 as similar children who did not attend.



Reynolds, 2001

saved almost \$7).

including \$305 million in state and local funding. Most of that went for providing necessary foster care and victim services, and that funding—while never adequate—must at least be maintained. Investing more now in preventing child abuse and neglect, instead of waiting to treat it, will save lives, reduce future crime and soon begin saving taxpayers' money. For example, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy found that nurse home visitation programs saved taxpayers and crime victims five dollars for each dollar invested. The Child-Parent Center preschool program saved taxpayers, victims, and participants ten dollars for every dollar invested (taxpayers alone

## Law Enforcement Leaders are United

Michigan law enforcement leaders are calling for greater investments to protect children from abuse and neglect, save taxpayers' dollars, and make all Michiganders safer. This call has been endorsed by the Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan, and the Michigan Sheriffs' Association. The evidence is in. We can save millions of dollars in Michigan while preventing most abuse and neglect in high-risk families. The time to act is now.

## Quality In-home Parent Coaching Saves Money

Taxpayers saved over \$5 for every \$1 invested in the Nurse Family Partnership program.



For every \$1  
invested



Over \$5 was  
saved

Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2006

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Source citation and other research are available at [www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org).  
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Hundreds of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs,  
Prosecutors, other Law Enforcement  
Leaders, and Violence Survivors  
Preventing Crime and Violence

## In-Home Parent Coaching Programs

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In-home parent coaching programs share several common elements. In general, programs:

- provide voluntary coaching to parents in home settings;
- provide services for some period of time between conception and age 5; and
- use providers trained to deliver that model's services.

In-home parent coaching programs differ in their:

- population served;
- service provider qualifications;
- model goals and services;
- frequency and duration of visits; and
- number of beneficiaries.

### The Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)

- Population Served: Low-income, first time mothers. A typical mother served is 19 years old, unmarried, has 11 years of education, is unemployed and lives with her mother and other family members. At the time of entering the program, approximately 75% report receiving WIC and 63% report receiving Medicaid. Visits begin early in the second trimester (14-16 weeks gestation) and continue through a child's second birthday.
- Providers: Trained nurses with limited caseloads (max. 25 families) and close supervision.
- Goals and Services: Goals include: healthier pregnancies, improved child health and development and more self-sufficient mothers. NFP provides coaching in parenting skills and other advice and support, following NFP Visit Guidelines. Nurse home visitors also involve mothers' support systems including family members, fathers and friends, and they help families use other health and human services they may need.
- Visit Frequency and Duration: Weekly visits for the first month after enrollment and then every other week until the baby is born. Visits are weekly for the first six weeks after the baby is born and then every other week until the baby is 20 months. The last four visits are monthly until the child is two years old.
- Number of Beneficiaries: Approximately 12,000 families in 20 states.

### Parents as Teachers (PAT)

- Population Served: Accessible to families at all income levels ("universal"). 41% of families are low-income. Services are offered from pregnancy until a child enters kindergarten, usually age 5.
- Providers: PAT-certified parent educators. Training focuses on personal visits, group meetings, screenings, community resources, as well as child development and parenting information. All participants who satisfactorily complete any core training are certified as Parents as Teachers parent educators. Sessions are taught by highly experienced trainers who come from education, human development or social service backgrounds and are actively involved in Parents as Teachers programs.
- Goals and Services: Parent educators share age-appropriate child development information with parents, address parent concerns and help improve parent child

interactions. Goals include: increased parent knowledge of early childhood development and improved parenting practices; early detection of developmental delays and health issues through screenings; abuse and neglect prevention; and increased school readiness and school success.

- Visit Frequency and Duration: Families receive monthly, biweekly or weekly visits depending on the severity of needs. Also, group meetings for parents are provided.
- Number of Beneficiaries: Approximately 400,000 families in 2003, in all 50 states and internationally.

### **Healthy Families America (HFA)**

- Population Served: Use a standardized assessment of risk factors to identify families in need. Services are initiated prenatally or at birth and last 3-5 years.
- Providers: Trained Family Support Workers with limited caseloads of 15-20 families. They are paraprofessionals who receive 110 hours of annual training. 74% have at least some college education.
- Goals and Services: Goals are to promote positive parenting, enhance child health and prevent abuse and neglect among expectant and new parents by improving parent-child interactions and child development. Includes comprehensive services focused on parents and children and referrals to medical providers and others. All HFA programs adhere to a standardized framework for program development and implementation.
- Visit Frequency and Duration: Quarterly, monthly or bi-weekly visits.
- Number of Beneficiaries: More than 50,000 families in over 430 communities in the United States and Canada.

### **Early Head Start (EHS)**

- Population Served: Poverty-level families, with preference for those with the highest need (with 10% of enrollment reserved for those with disabilities). Local programs are allowed to serve up to 10% of the children with family incomes over the poverty line. Visits can begin before birth and last until children reach three years of age.
- Providers: Early Head Start staff must meet the same requirements as teachers and staff within a center-based Head Start program. (At least half of all Head Start teachers in center-based programs must have an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in Early Childhood Education or a degree in a related field, with pre-school teaching experience. If a classroom in a center-based program does not have a teacher with a degree in early childhood education, or a related field with experience in teaching preschool children, the teacher must have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or a State awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements of a CDA credential.)
- Goals and Services: EHS is a child development program that emphasizes activities to enhance children's development and support and services for parents, as well as health screenings and assessments. EHS children can be served in home-based, center-based or a combination of settings.
- Visit Frequency and Duration: EHS families that receive home-based services are visited weekly and have the option to attend bi-monthly group meetings where children and parents can interact.
- Number of Beneficiaries: As of 2004, EHS served 62,000 children in 7,000 communities.



### **Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)**

- *Population Served:* Parents with limited or unsuccessful schooling and/or limited financial resources. The program serves three-, four- and five-year-old children.
- *Providers:* Home visitors from the community who are also parents in the program, supervised by a professional coordinator.
- *Goals and Services:* Family-focused parent involvement and school readiness program that helps parents prepare their children for success in school and beyond by focusing on cognitive development. The parent is provided with a set of carefully developed, developmentally appropriate curriculum, books and materials designed to strengthen their children's cognitive skills, early literacy skills, social/emotional and physical development. Role play is the primary method of teaching.
- *Visit Frequency and Duration:* Home visits are interspersed with bi-weekly group meetings.
- *Number of Beneficiaries:* Over 16,000 children as of 2002-03, in 167 HIPPY sites in 26 states and DC.

### **Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP)**

- *Population Served:* Families in which the parents have low levels of education (many have not graduated from high school), low-income families, single-parent families, families who have cultural and/or language barriers that may inhibit school involvement and success, families with teen parents, families whose children are deemed at-risk for low academic achievement and behavioral problems, families who do not have access to center-based early childhood or parenting programs, homeless families, families in which there is limited language stimulation at home and families with multiple risk factors. Typically, families participate in the program when their child is 2- and 3-years-old. A child can, however, enter PCHP as young as 16 months and some sites serve families with children up to 4-years-old.
- *Providers:* Site Coordinators hired by the local sponsoring agency and trained by the PCHP's National Center, and locally recruited and trained Home Visitors.
- *Goals and Services:* The Program emphasizes the importance of quality parent-child verbal interaction to promote children's cognitive and social-emotional development. PCHP utilizes a non-directive approach by modeling behaviors for parents and using engaging books and stimulating toys that enhance children's development, rather than a "teaching" approach.
- *Visit Frequency and Duration:* Half-an-hour, twice-a-week visits for two years.
- *Number of Beneficiaries:* 137 US community-based replication sites. 85% of families who start the program complete the two years. Approximately 60,000 children are served.





*Hundreds of Police Chiefs, Sheriffs,  
Prosecutors, other Law Enforcement  
Leaders, and Violence Survivors  
Preventing Crime and Violence*

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## **From Michigan's Front Line Against Crime: A School and Youth Violence Prevention Plan**

As a statewide organization of more than 400 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, other law enforcement leaders, and violence survivors, we are determined to see that dangerous criminals are put behind bars. But anyone who thinks that jailing a criminal undoes the agony of crime has not seen crime up close.

Michigan's anti-crime arsenal contains no weapons more powerful than the research-based programs that help kids get the right start in life—programs like Head Start, pre-kindergarten and educational child care, child abuse and neglect prevention, youth development activities for the after-school and summer hours, and intervention programs proven to help troubled kids.

Yet today, inadequate funding for these critical crime-prevention investments leaves thousands of children at needless risk of becoming violent or delinquent teens and adult criminals—and leaves every Michiganiaan at risk of becoming a crime victim. In 2005, 55,877 violent crimes were reported to Michigan police departments, an average of 153 per day.

### **State Law Enforcement organizations support this plan:**

- ✓ **Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police**
- ✓ **Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan**
- ✓ **Michigan Sheriffs' Association**

Dozens of national and other state law enforcement and victim assistance organizations across the country have adopted similar resolutions supporting the components of the FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS School and Youth Violence Prevention Plan.

We call on Michigan's federal, state and local officials to implement a four-part plan to dramatically reduce crime and violence, and help Michigan's young people learn the skills and values they need to become good neighbors and responsible adults. While no plan can prevent every violent act, this common-sense approach—based on our experience and the latest research about what really works to fight crime—can make all of us safer and save tax dollars.

### **Four Actions to Dramatically Reduce School and Youth Violence**

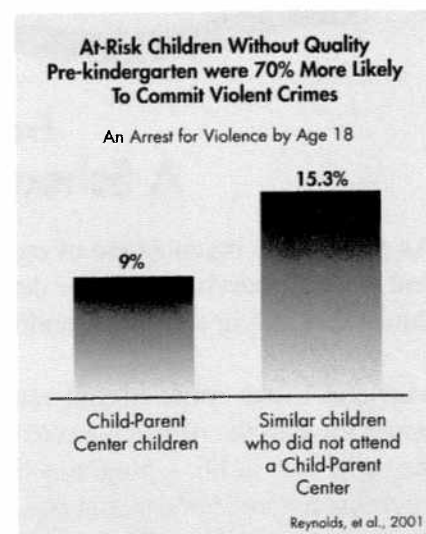
- **Provide all families access to quality preschool and educational child care programs proven to reduce crime.**
- **Help at-risk parents improve their parenting and prevent child abuse and neglect by offering in-home parenting coaching. Make sure child protective services have policies and resources sufficient to protect and heal abused and neglected children.**
- **Provide all school-age children and teens access to after-school youth development programs to shut down the "Prime Time for Juvenile Crime."**
- **Identify troubled children and teens as early as possible, intervene and provide them and their parents with the training and counseling necessary to help them avoid crime.**

## 1. Provide all families access to quality preschool and educational child care programs proven to reduce crime.

Law enforcement leaders have long known that intervening early in children's lives is the best way to prevent violence and crime. Rigorous social science and neuroscience studies now provide evidence that supports what many have known from experience: in the first few years of life, children's intellect and emotions, and even their ability to feel concern for others (a prerequisite to conscience) are being permanently shaped. When parents are at work trying to make ends meet, high quality programs for children, age birth to 5, can not only prepare them to succeed in school but also reduce later crime. For example:

- Chicago's publicly-funded Child-Parent Centers have served almost 100,000 3- and 4-year-olds since 1967. Researchers tracked 989 of those children and 550 similar children not in the program for 14 years. The children who did not participate were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18. This program also cut child abuse and neglect (see Section 2).
- In Ypsilanti, Michigan, 3- and 4-year-olds from low-income families who were randomly assigned to a group that did not receive preschool were five times more likely to have become chronic lawbreakers by age 27 than those who were assigned to the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation's Perry Preschool program.

More than 66 percent of Michigan's more than 749,000 children under age 6 have both parents or their only single parent in the workforce. Currently, Michigan only marginally funds pre-kindergarten programs leaving a large unmet need. When parents are forced to leave their children in inadequate educational child care, we all pay a terrible price.



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*"We need to help give at-risk kids the right start so that they're ready to learn when they get to school and less likely to take the path toward crime and violence. Quality child care and school readiness programs are proven to give children that opportunity."*

– Sheriff Gene Wriggelsworth,  
Ingham County

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## 2. Help at-risk parents improve their parenting and prevent child abuse and neglect by offering in-home parenting coaching. Make sure child protective services have policies and resources sufficient to protect and heal abused and neglected children.

In 2004, more than 29,805 children were abused or neglected in Michigan. Studies show that being abused or neglected multiplies the risk that a child will grow up to be violent. It is imperative to expand parenting-coaching and family support programs that prevent children from being abused and neglected, reduce subsequent delinquency, and improve other outcomes for children. Research has proven the success of these programs:

- Michigan's "0-3 Secondary Prevention Initiative," which provides services such as home visits and parent coaching, has significantly reduced child abuse referrals.
- The Nurse-Family Partnership randomly assigned half of a group of at-risk families to receive visits by specially-trained nurses who provided coaching in parenting skills and other advice and support. Beginning during the mother's pregnancy and continuing until the child's second birthday, parents learned to manage stress, understand the health and nutrition needs of newborns, identify the signs of problems, make their home safe, and find resources such as doctors and other child care help. Rigorous research originally published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* showed the program could prevent as many as half of all cases of abuse or neglect among at-risk families. By the time the children of the mothers in the program were age 15, they had 59 percent fewer arrests than the children of mothers left out of the program.
- Chicago's Child-Parent Centers preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds from poor neighborhoods includes a strong parental involvement requirement. Children who participated in the preschool program and similar children who did not participate were tracked by researchers until age 18. The study found that abuse and neglect of children in the program was cut in half.

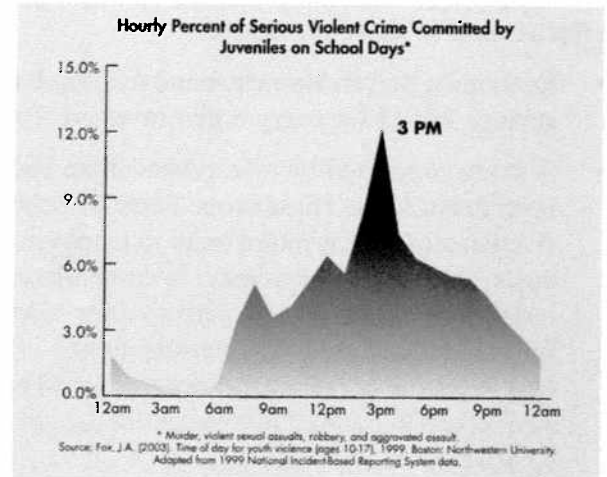
There must be a national and statewide commitment to provide child protective, foster care and adoption services with comprehensive policies, resources, and enough well-trained staff to protect and heal children who have been abused and neglected.

### **3. Provide all school-age children and teens access to after-school youth development programs to shut down the “Prime Time for Juvenile Crime.”**

In the hours after the school bell rings—when thousands of children and teens hit the streets with neither constructive activities nor adult supervision—violent juvenile crime soars and the prime time for juvenile crime begins. On school days, the peak hours for juvenile crime are from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. These are also the hours when kids are most likely to become victims of crime. Being unsupervised after school doubles the risk that 8th-graders will smoke, drink alcohol or use drugs.

Quality youth development programs in the after-school hours can cut crime immediately and transform this prime time for juvenile crime into hours of academic enrichment, wholesome fun and community service. They protect both kids and adults from becoming victims of crime, and cut smoking and drug use, while helping youngsters develop the respect, discipline and skills they need to become contributing citizens. For example:

- Five housing projects without Boys & Girls Clubs were compared to five receiving new clubs. At the beginning, drug activity and vandalism were the same. But by the time the study ended, the housing projects without the programs had 50 percent more vandalism and scored 37 percent worse on drug activity. The study was conducted in several U.S. cities.
- Among kids with prior histories of arrest, those who did not participate in San Francisco’s Bayview Safe Haven after-school program were twice as likely to be arrested during the six-month initial “intervention” period as program participants. Among kids with no prior histories or arrest, those who did not participate were three times more likely to be arrested during that same intervention period.
- Young people who were randomly assigned to a Big Brother or Big Sister were about half as likely to begin illegal drug use and nearly one third less likely to hit someone compared to those who were assigned to a waiting list.



### **4. Identify troubled children and teens as early as possible, intervene and provide them and their parents with the training and counseling necessary to help them avoid crime.**

Children who are overly aggressive are at risk for problems later in life. Early screening and intervention through social skills training, counseling or other help for children and their families can get kids back on track.

- The Incredible Years program provides training in problem solving and social issues for families of children age 2 to 8 with overly aggressive behavior problems. Researchers report that it has been able to stop the cycle of aggression for approximately two-thirds of the families receiving help.
- A study found that 40 percent of school bullies had three or more criminal convictions as adults. Tested anti bullying programs, such as the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, cut bullying by as much as half.

Many youths who are already involved in crime can become productive citizens with the right help.

- Three intensive family intervention programs that provide the parents or foster parents of violent juvenile offenders with effective tools to better control the children’s behavior have been proven to cut crime. Research shows that repeat arrests of youths in Functional Family Therapy, Multisystemic Therapy and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care have been cut by as much as half compared to the re-arrest rate of youths not receiving this help.

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*“Investing now in our most vulnerable children is the best way to prevent crime. It helps put kids on the right track and makes everyone safer.”*

– **Denise Smith**, former probation officer and crime survivor, Detroit

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- Another approach, known as Cognitive Behavior Therapy, helps serious juvenile offenders learn and use social skills to avoid re-offending. Research studies show CBT reduces re-arrests among troubled youths by one-third to two-thirds compared to those not receiving the services.

## **The Bottom Line: Investing in Kids Saves Lives and Money**

When Michigan fails to invest in children, all Michigan citizens pay far more later—not just in lost lives, but also in tax dollars. The Michigan Treasury will actually have more money to dedicate to other uses in the future by investing today in programs to help kids get the right start in life. Research clearly demonstrates the cost-effectiveness of these programs:

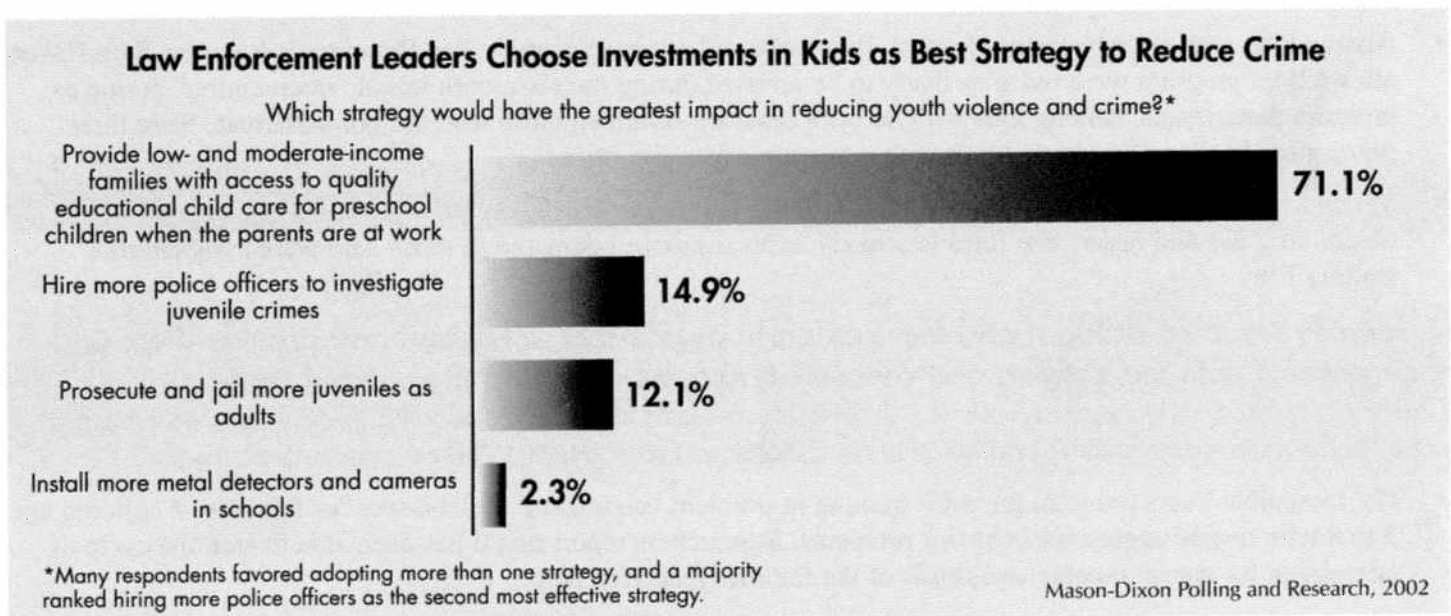
- Economist Steven Barnett found that the High/Scope Foundation's Perry Preschool program produced a net savings of \$17 for every dollar invested. Total savings were \$259,000 per child, \$172,000 of it in crime costs.
- A study conducted by researchers at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis showed that the return on investment in the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program was 16 percent after adjusting for inflation. Seventy-five percent of that return went to taxpayers in the form of decreased special education expenditures, crime costs, and welfare payments. In comparison, the long-term return on U.S. stocks is 7 percent after adjusting for inflation. Thus, an initial investment of \$1,000 in a program like Perry Preschool would return over \$19,000 in 20 years while the same initial investment in the stock market would return less than \$4,000.
- Professor Mark A. Cohen of Vanderbilt University estimated that for each high-risk youth prevented from adopting a life of crime, the country saves \$1.7 million.

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***"The time to divert people from a life of crime is when they're children. By the time they are adults, the greatest opportunity is lost."***

**– Prosecutor David Gorcyca,**  
Oakland County

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For citations of studies referred to above visit [www.fightcrime.org](http://www.fightcrime.org)



Launched in 2001, FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS MICHIGAN is a bipartisan, anti-crime organization led by more than 400 police chiefs, prosecutors, sheriffs, other law enforcement leaders and violence survivors. It is supported by tax-deductible contributions from foundations, individuals, and corporations, and receives no funds from federal, state, or local governments. It is a project of the Washington, D.C.-based FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS, a national, non-profit organization led by more than 3,000 police chiefs, prosecutors, sheriffs, other law enforcement leaders and violence survivors. Major funding is provided by the Joyce Foundation, The Skillman Foundation, and The Frey Foundation.

**State Director:** Kathy "K.P." Pelleran, [kppelleran@fightcrime.org](mailto:kppelleran@fightcrime.org) **Deputy Director:** Donna Aberlich, [daberlich@fightcrime.org](mailto:daberlich@fightcrime.org)

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